

CHAPTER 10

Yûnus

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 11 *sections*; 109 *verses*)

All that is said in this chapter of *Yûnus*, after whom it is named, is an incidental reference to his people having benefited by the warning. There are more detailed references to Nûh and Mûsâ, but in selecting *Yûnus*' name for the title there seems to be a hint that, as the people of *Yûnus* benefited by his warning, so would the Arabs ultimately believe in the Prophet.

The chief feature of this chapter is that, while it asserts the truth of revelation, it also lays stress on the merciful dealing of the Divine Being with human beings. It opens with a statement of the truth of Divine revelation in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, and this is the subject discussed in the first two sections. The second section closes with a demand for a sign on the part of the disbelievers, and they are told that judgment is deferred for a while; the reason being given in the third section, where it is shown that Divine dealing with human beings is characterized by mercy, and therefore He does not hasten punishment. The fourth section tells us that evidence of His mercy exists in nature, for He grants gifts which it is not in the power of anyone else to grant, and, as material gifts from Him are characterized by uniqueness, so is His gift of revelation, and the like of it cannot be produced by anyone else. The fifth section states that the reprobate must ultimately meet with their punishment, while the sixth again calls attention to the preponderance of the quality of mercy in the Divine Being, and the seventh contrasts the believers with the disbelievers. The eighth and ninth sections refer briefly to the histories of Nûh and Mûsâ. The tenth states, by a brief allusion to *Yûnus*, that those who heed the warning will benefit, and the last section shows that all good is controlled by the Divine Being. Hence human beings must turn to Him.

This is the first chapter of the *alif lâm râ* group and belongs to the last Makkan period; see **1a**.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

I seek the assistance of Allâh the Beneficent Creator the Merciful bounty giver.

SECTION 1: Truth of Revelation

1 *Alif lâm râ* These are the verses of the Book, full of wisdom.^a

2 Is it a wonder to the people that We have revealed to a man from among themselves: Warn the people and give good news to those who believe that for them is advancement in excellence^a with their *Rabb*? The disbelievers say: This is surely a manifest enchanter.

3 Surely your *Rabb* is Allâh, Who created the *samâwât* and the earth in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power regulating the Affair.^a There is no intercessor except after His permission. This is Allâh, your *Rabb*, therefore serve Him. Will you not mind?

1a. The *kitâb*, or the *Qur'ân*, is called *hakim*, wise or full of wisdom, either because it possesses wisdom, i.e. *the quality which discriminates between truth and falsehood and right and wrong*, or because it is *muhkam*, i.e. *free from all incongruity or unsoundness* or *because it possesses both these qualities* (*Al-Mufradât fî Gharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî).

2a. *Qadam* means *foot*, also *going before* another with regard to time or degree; and *sidq* is *truth in word or deed*, and *every excellent deed* is called *sidq* (*Al-Mufradât fî Gharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî). *Qadama sidq-in* according to the same authority means *going forward* or *advancement in excellence*. It may also be translated as meaning *a footing of firmness*.

3a. For creation in six periods, see 7:54a, and for 'arsh, 7:54b. In regulating the Affair, there is a further reference to the spiritual evolution of man, as stated more clearly elsewhere: "He orders the Affair from the heaven to the earth" (32:5). See 32:5a where it is shown that *al-amr* really means the *Affair of Islâm*, which according to the Divine plan was now being established on earth. For intercession, see 2:48b.

4 To Him is your return, of all (of you). It is the promise of Allâh (made) in truth. Surely He produces the first creation, then He reproduces it, that He may reward with

equity those who believe and do good. And as for those who disbelieve, for them is a drink of hot water and a painful chastisement because they disbelieved.

5 He it is Who made the sun a shining brightness, and the moon a light,^a and ordained for it stages that you might know the computation of years and the reckoning. Allâh created not this but with truth. He makes the signs manifest for a people who know.^b

6 Surely in the variation of the night and the day, and that which Allâh has created in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for a people who keep their duty.

7 Those who expect not the meeting with Us, and are pleased with this world's life and are satisfied with it, and those who are heedless of Our messages —

8 These, their abode is the Fire because of what they earned.

9 Those who believe and do good, their *Rabb* guides them by their faith;^a rivers will flow beneath them in Gardens of bliss.

5a. *Dau'*, or *diyâ'*, signifies *that light which subsists by itself*, and *nûr*, *that which subsists through some other thing* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). The moon is called *nûr*, because its light is borrowed, as contrasted with the sun, which is called *diyâ'*.

5b. The whole of creation is, notwithstanding its variety, subject to one law, and clearly bears witness to the unity of its Maker. And just as the visible universe is subject to law, there is also a law working in the religious world.

10 Their cry therein will be, Glory to You, O Allâh! And their greeting, Peace! And the last of their cry will be: Praise be to Allâh, the *Rabb* of the worlds!^a

SECTION 2: Punishment of Rejection

11 And if Allâh were to hasten for men the (consequences of) evil, as they would hasten on the good, their doom would certainly have been decreed for them. But We leave those alone, who have no hope of meeting with Us, in their inordinacy, blindly wandering on.^a

12 And when affliction touches a man, he calls on Us, whether lying on his side or sitting or standing; but, when We remove his affliction from him, he passes on as

though he had never called on Us on account of an affliction that touched him. Thus is what they do, made fair-seeming to the extravagant.

13 And certainly We destroyed generations before you when they did wrong, and their messengers came to them with clear arguments, yet they would not believe. Thus do We recompense the guilty people.

9a. The light of faith, which is even here a guiding principle of man's actions, will assume a more palpable form in the life after death. Compare 57:12, where it is called the light running, or gleaming, before them.

10a. This is the Muslim paradise, and this description is sufficient to give the lie to those who say that the picture of the Muslim paradise drawn in Makkan revelation is characterized by sensuality.

11a. *Ajal* (translated as *doom*) means the *term* of a people, the *respite* granted to them, but it also means *death*, because death brings the term of life to an end (R). People desire and pray for good things to be hastened on to them, and they are hastened on, but in His merciful dealing with men God does not hasten on the consequences of evil, so that they may repent and escape the consequences of evil.

14 Then We made you rulers in the land after them, so that We might see how you act.

15 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, those who have no hope of meeting with Us say: Bring a Qur'ân other than this or change it.^a Say: It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I follow naught but what is revealed to me. Indeed I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the chastisement of a grievous day.^b

16 Say: If Allâh had desired, I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. I have lived among you a lifetime before it. Do you not then understand?^a

17 Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allâh or gives the lie to His messages? Surely the guilty never succeed.

18 And they serve besides Allâh that which can neither harm them nor profit them, and they say: These are our intercessors with Allâh. Say: Would you inform Allâh of what He knows not in the *samâwât* and the earth? Glory be to Him, and supremely exalted is He above what they set up (with Him)!

15a. They desire a revelation which should not condemn their evil ways and their idol-worship, nor contain any threats of their coming doom.

15b. The words show how true the Prophet himself was to revelation, translating every one of its precepts into practice.

16a. The Prophet's truthfulness and honesty before he received the Divine revelation were undisputed, and he had earned such renown for these qualities that he was known in the land as *al-Amîn*, i.e. *the Faithful one*, or *the Truthful one*. The argument is that if, as they admitted, he had never told a lie in his lifetime, even for the sake of a personal advantage, how could he, now that he had passed the age of youth and passions, speak falsely, and that to his own detriment? He was not the gainer, but a sufferer thereby, on account of the persecution which his preaching had brought about for him. Moreover, a man who had so long refrained from showing any interest in their lives and their modes of worship, and had all but lived the silent life of a recluse among them, could not, of his own accord, be imagined to have suddenly changed the course of his life.

19 And (all) people are but a single nation then they disagree. And had not a word already gone forth from your *Rabb*, the matter would have certainly been decided between them in respect of that wherein they disagree.^a

20 And they say: Why is not a sign sent to him from his *Rabb*? Say: The unseen is only for Allâh, so wait; surely I too with you am of those who wait.^a

SECTION 3: Merciful Dealing

21 And when We make people taste of mercy after an affliction touches them,^a lo! they devise plans against Our messages. Say: Allâh is quicker to plan. Surely Our messengers write down what you plan.

22 He it is Who makes you travel by land and sea; until, when you are in the ships, and they sail on with them in a pleasant breeze, and they rejoice at it, a violent wind overtakes them and the billows surge in on them from all sides, and they deem that they are encompassed about. Then they pray to Allâh, being sincere to Him in obedience: If You deliver us from this, we will certainly be of the grateful ones.

19a. The *word* that had gone forth is referred to in many places: “And they say: When will this promise come to pass, if you are truthful? Say: Maybe somewhat of that which you seek to hasten has drawn nigh to you” (27:71, 72). And again: “Say: You have the appointment of a day which you cannot postpone by an hour, nor hasten on” (34:30); see 34:30a.

20a. It is clear from the context that their demand is for the punishment with which they are threatened, because they would recognize no other sign; they are told to *wait* for the sign which would undoubtedly come.

21a. Some think that there is a reference here to the famine which prevailed for seven years at Makkah (*Al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* (Commentary), by Imâm Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî). For the famine itself see 44:10a. The statement here may only be a general description of ordinary afflictions which befall man, an instance of which is given in the next verse.

23 But when He delivers them, lo! They are unjustly rebellious in the earth. O men, your rebellion is against yourselves — a provision (only) of this world’s life. Then to Us is your return, so We shall inform you of what you did.

24 The likeness of this world’s life is only as water which We send down from the clouds, then the herbage of the earth, of which men and cattle eat, grows luxuriantly thereby; until when the earth puts on its golden raiment and it becomes adorned, and its people think that they are masters of it, Our command comes to it, by night or by day, so We render it as reaped seed-produce, as though it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We make clear the messages for a people who reflect.

25 And Allâh invites to the abode of peace, and guides whom He pleases to the right path.^a

26 For those who do good is good (reward) and more (than this). Neither blackness nor ignominy will cover their faces. These are the owners of the Garden; therein they will abide.^a

25a. This is another description of the Muslim paradise, which is called *dâr al-salâm*, or *the abode of peace*. The word *salâm* in *dâr al-salâm* is from the same root as *Islâm*. Islâm, in fact, makes even this world an abode of peace for a true Muslim; he makes his peace with his *Rabb*, and he lives at peace with his fellow-men. The peace of the next life is, in fact, a continuation of the peace of mind which a Muslim finds in this very life.

27 And those who earn evil, the punishment of an evil is the like thereof, and abasement will cover them — they will have none to protect them from Allâh — as if their faces had been covered with slices of the dense darkness of night. These are the companions of the Fire; therein they will abide.

28 And on the day when We gather them all together, then We shall say to those who associated others (with Allâh): Keep where you are, you and your associate-gods. Then We shall separate them one from another, and their associates will say: It was not us that you served.

29 So Allâh suffices as a witness between us and you that we were quite unaware of your serving (us).

30 There will every soul become acquainted with what it sent before, and they will be brought back to Allâh, their true Patron, and that which they devised will escape from them.

SECTION 4: Uniqueness of Divine Gifts

31 Say: Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth, or who controls the hearing and the sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead, and brings forth the dead from the living? And who regulates the affair? They will say: Allâh. Say then: Will you not then guard against evil?

26a. Throughout the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân the reward of virtue is spoken of as being much more than actual recompense, while evil is either spoken of as being forgiven or as being punished only with a like punishment. Thus in 42:25 and 26: “And He it is Who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons evil deeds, and He knows what you do; and He answers those who believe and do good deeds, and gives them more out of His grace”. And in 6:160: “Whoever brings a good deed will have tenfold like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, will be recompensed only with the like of it”; see 6:160a.

32 Such then is Allâh, your true *Rabb*. And what is there after the truth but error? How then are you turned away!

33 Thus does the word of your *Rabb* prove true against those who transgress that they believe not.^a

34 Say: Is there anyone among your associate-gods who produces the first creation, then reproduces it? Say: Allâh produces the first creation, then He reproduces it. How are you then turned away!

35 Say: Is there any of your associate-gods who guides to the Truth?

Say: Allâh guides to the Truth. Is He then Who guides to the Truth more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not the way unless he is guided? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?

36 And most of them follow naught but conjecture. Surely conjecture will not avail aught against the Truth. Truly Allâh is Knower of what they do.

37 And this Qur'ân is not such as could be forged by those besides Allâh, but it is a verification of that which is before it and a clear explanation of the Book, there is no doubt in it, from the *Rabb* of the worlds.^a

33a. The *word* refers to the sentence of punishment which must come to pass because they believe not, or to the fact that their disbelief is a result of their transgression.

38 Or say they: He has forged it? Say: Then bring a chapter like it, and invite whom you can besides Allâh, if you are truthful.

39 Nay, they reject that, whose knowledge they cannot compass and whose final sequel has not yet come to them.^a Even thus did those before them reject; then see what was the end of the wrongdoers.

40 And of them is he who believes in it and of them is he who believes not in it. And your *Rabb* best knows the mischief-makers.

SECTION 5: The Reprobate and their Punishment

41 And if they reject you, say: My work is for me and your work for you. You are clear of what I do and I am clear of what you do.

42 And of them are some who listen to you. But can you make the deaf to hear, though they will not understand?

43 And of them are some who look at you. But can you show the way to the blind, though they will not see?^a

37a. The Qur'ân explains in clear words many of the most important principles of religion which are left ambiguous or obscure in the previous books. For instance, the Bible is obscure on the important principle of resurrection or life after death; Jesus himself when questioned by the Sadducees had to resort to an argument instead of quoting chapter and verse (Matt. 22:23, etc.) Similarly the attributes of the Divine Being are not explained in clear words and the result is the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. The Qur'ân fully explains all such points and finally settles all these questions.

39a. For the two significances of *ta'wîl*, see 4:59b. By the final sequel is meant the consequence of the rejection of the Truth. This is clear from what is said in 7:53: "Do they wait for aught but its final sequel? On the day when its final sequel comes, those who neglected it before will say: ... Are there any intercessors on our behalf so that they should intercede for us?"

44 Surely Allâh wrongs not men in aught, but men wrong themselves.

45 And on the day when He will gather them, as though they had not stayed but an hour of the day, they will recognize one another.^a They perish indeed who reject the meeting with Allâh, and they follow not the right way.

46 And if We show thee something of that which We promise them, or cause thee to die, yet to Us is their return, and Allâh is Witness to what they do.^a

47 And for every nation there is a messenger.^a So when their messenger comes, the matter is decided between them with justice, and they are not wronged.^b

48 And they say: When will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful?

43a. Compare 7:179: "They have hearts wherewith they understand not, and they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not".

45a. They will either recognize each other as they were in the world, or some of them will recognize the others who remained in disbelief and error.

46a. The significance of the words "to Us is their return" is that those who are warned will be dealt with by Allâh as they deserve, and the warning will prove true. In the first part of the verse they are told that it is no concern of theirs whether the Prophet

lives to punish them with his own hands or that punishment is executed by Allâh in some other way. The verse, therefore, only lays stress on their approaching doom.

47a. Compare 35:24: “And there are not a people but a warner has gone among them”. Humanity will always be under the deepest obligation to the Prophet for this broad humanitarian principle; see 35:24a.

47b. The warning that their doom must overtake the opponents is reasserted in these words. By “between them” must be understood the Messenger and those who charge him with falsehood; the issue is between the preacher and the rejectors.

49 Say: I control not for myself any harm, or any benefit, except what Allâh pleases.^a Every nation has a term. When their term comes, they cannot put it off an hour, nor can they bring it before (its time).^b

50 Say: Do you see if His chastisement overtakes you by night or by day? What then is there of it that the guilty would hasten?^a

51 And when it comes to pass, will you believe in it? What! now! And you hastened it on.

52 Then will it be said to those who were unjust: Taste abiding chastisement; you are not requited except for what you earned.

53 And they ask you: Is that true? Say: Aye, by my *Rabb*! It is surely the Truth, and you will not escape.

SECTION 6: Mercy takes Precedence of Punishment

54 And if every soul that has done injustice had all that is in the earth, it would offer it for ransom. And they will manifest^a regret when they see the chastisement. And it will be decided between them with justice, and they will not be wronged.

49a. These are not the words which a pretender would utter. The words are those of an honest man who, without assuming any personal pretensions, preaches truth in all sincerity. The Holy Prophet is repeatedly made to disclaim any control of good and evil, so that he offers no low temptation to his followers. Truth must be accepted for its own sake, not for any hope of worldly gain or fear of worldly loss.

49b. The verse does not teach fatalism. It lays down a truth which no historian can deny. To every nation, as to every individual, is granted a term of life, and nations live and die like individuals.

50a. The coming of the doom by night or by day signifies its coming at a time when people are engaged in their revelries or occupied with their business transactions, so as to be utterly inattentive to the real value of life. There is a gentle remonstrance conveyed in the words: “What then is there of it that the guilty would hasten?” The doom approaches; why then should a people hasten on its approach by their guiltiness?

54a. *Asarra* is one of the words which have contrary meanings. It means *he concealed it* as well as *he manifested it*.

55 Now surely whatever is in the *samâwât* and the earth is Allâh’s. Now surely Allâh’s promise is true, but most of them know not.

56 He gives life and causes death, and to Him you will be returned.

57 O men, there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts; and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.^a

58 Say: In the grace of Allâh and in His mercy, in that they should rejoice. It is better than that which they hoard.^a

59 Say: See you what Allâh has sent down for you of sustenance, then you make (a part) of it unlawful and (a part) lawful. Say: Has Allâh commanded you or do you forge a lie against Allâh?^a

60 And what think those who forge lies against Allâh of the day of Resurrection? Surely Allâh is Bountiful to men, but most of them give not thanks.

57a. They demanded punishment again and again, but they are told that Allâh has sent to them that in which they will find a healing and a guidance and a mercy for them, viz. the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân. Compare 29:51, where, in answer to a demand for a sign which should destroy them, the disbelievers are told: “Is it not enough for them that We have revealed to you the Book which is recited to them? Surely there is mercy in this and a reminder for a people who believe”.

58a. Men hoard wealth, but they are told that the religious values of life — the grace of Allâh and His mercy — are much better.

59a. Just as Allâh gave them the means of their physical sustenance, He has also sent His grace and mercy for their religious welfare through revelation. Yet they deprive themselves of the religious sustenance as if it were unlawful. Or the reference may be to their declaring certain things to be unlawful for them out of reverence for their idols.

SECTION 7: Good News for the Faithful

61 And you are not (engaged) in any affair and you recite not concerning it any portion of the Qur'ân, and you do no work, but We are Witness of you when you are engaged therein. And not the weight of an atom in the earth or in the *samâ'* is hidden from your *Rabb*, nor anything less than that nor greater, but it is (all) in a clear book.^a

62 Now surely the friends of Allâh, they have no fear nor do they grieve^a —

63 Those who believe and keep their duty.

64 For them is good news^a in this world's life and in the Hereafter. There is no changing the words of Allâh.^b That is the mighty achievement.

61a. The clear book mentioned here is not, of course, a collection of written or printed sheets bound together. It is the book of the Divine law which makes every deed, good or evil, great or small, bring its reward. That there can be something less than an atom is one of those wonderful scientific disclosures of which the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân is full; in modern scientific language, the atom can be broken into pieces.

62a. The friends of Allâh are those who help the Divine cause and invite people to faith in Allâh. They attain to that religious height where fear and grief are unknown. There is also a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Truth, for when a human being attains his or her object, all his or her fear is gone and he or she no more grieves for the sacrifices he or she has made; v. 64 makes it clear.

64a. The Holy Prophet said: "There has remained nothing of prophethood except *mubashsharât*." Asked what is meant by *mubashsharât*, he replied, "*Good visions*" (B. 92:5). Elsewhere *good visions* are said to be a part of prophethood (B. 92:4), which shows that, as the prophets were informed of the triumph of Truth, so will their followers be given this good news in their visions. The upholders of the Divine cause, we are thus told, will not only be successful — they will also receive the good news of their ultimate triumph in good visions.

64b. The *words of Allâh* here signify the *prophecies*. It is the prophecy of the good reward for the faithful that is mentioned immediately before these words, and the meaning of there being no change is that the prophetic word must be fulfilled; compare similar words used in 6:34, 115 and 18:27.

65 And let not their speech grieve you. Surely might belong wholly to Allâh. He is the Hearer, the Knower.

66 Now, surely, whatever is in the *samâwât* and whatever is in the earth is Allâh's.^a And what do follow those who call on associates besides Allâh? They follow naught but conjecture, and they only lie.

67 He it is Who made for you the night that you might rest therein and the day giving light. Surely in this are signs for a people who hear.

68 They say: Allâh has taken a son (to Himself). Glory be to Him! He is the Self-sufficient. His is what is in the *samâwât* and what is in the earth. You have no authority for this. Say you against Allâh what you know not?

69 Say: Those who forge a lie against Allâh will not succeed.

70 A little enjoyment in this world, then to Us is their return, then We shall make them taste severe chastisement because they disbelieved.

SECTION 8: Nûh and Mûsâ

71 And recite to them the story of Nûh, when he said to his people: O my people, if my staying (here) and my reminding (you) by the messages of Allâh is hard on you, on Allâh do I rely; so decide upon your course of action and (gather) your associates. Then let not your course of action be dubious to you, so have it executed against me and give me no respite.^a

66a. In the previous verse, the Prophet is told not to be grieved at what the disbelievers said. "Might belongs wholly to Allâh," he is there told, and, therefore, no force in the world could frustrate the Divine purpose. The same idea is here expressed in the words "Whatever is in the *samâwât* and whatever is in the earth is Allâh's".

72 But if you turn back, I ask for no reward from you. My reward is only with Allâh, and I am commanded to be of those who submit.

73 But they rejected him, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We made them rulers and drowned those who rejected Our messages. See, then, what was the end of those who were warned.

74 Then, after him We sent messengers to their people. They came to them with clear arguments, but they would not believe what they had rejected before. Thus do We seal the hearts of those who exceed the limits.^a

75 Then after them We sent Mûsâ and Hârûn to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our signs, but they were arrogant, and they were a guilty people.

76 So when the truth came to them from Us, they said: This is surely clear enchantment!

77 Mûsâ said: Say you (this) of the truth when it has come to you? Is it enchantment? And the enchanter never succeed.

71a. See 7:59a for Nûh's history. The challenge of Nûh to his opponents was, in fact, being reproduced now as a challenge to the opponents of the Holy Prophet. And these opponents did, in fact, decide upon their course of action in their great council hall, perhaps a year or two later, and surrounded the Prophet's house in accordance with that decision. But the Prophet escaped unnoticed from among them and they were unable to lay their hands on him.

74a. They do not ponder over the truth, but, having rejected once, go on opposing its progress without reflecting on it. This condition is described as *the sealing of the heart*, because the heart, being made for reflection, would no doubt be fitly described as being sealed when it ceases to reflect.

78 They said: Have you come to us to turn us away from that which we found our fathers following, and (that) greatness in the land may be for you two? And we are not going to believe in you.

79 And Pharaoh said: Bring to me every skilful enchanter.

80 So when the enchanter came, Mûsâ said to them: Cast what you are going to cast.

81 So when they had cast down, Mûsâ said: What you have brought is deception. Surely Allâh will make it naught. Surely Allâh allows not the work of mischief-makers to thrive.

82 And Allâh will establish the truth by His words, though the guilty be averse.

SECTION 9: End of Opposition to Mûsâ

83 But, on account of the fear of Pharaoh and their chiefs persecuting them, none believed in Mûsâ except a few of his people. And Pharaoh was truly high-handed in the land; and surely he was extravagant.^a

84 And Mûsâ said: O my people, if you believe in Allâh, then rely on Him if you submit (to Him).

85 They said: On Allâh we rely; our *Rabb*, make us not a trial for the unjust people.

86 And deliver us by Your mercy from the disbelieving people.

83a. The Isrâ'îlites believed in Mûsâ as the verses that follow show. By *his people*, therefore, are meant Pharaoh's wife (66:11) and a believer (40:28). The word *dhurriyyah* means offspring, and according to I'Ab means here *qalîl* or *a few*.

87 And We revealed to Mûsâ and his brother: Take for your people houses to abide in Egypt and make your houses places of worship^a and keep up prayer. And give good news to the believers.

88 And Mûsâ said: Our *Rabb*, surely You have given Pharaoh and his chiefs finery and riches in this world's life, our *Rabb*, that they may lead (people) astray from Your way.^a Our *Rabb*, destroy their riches and harden their hearts, so that they believe not till they see the painful chastisement.^b

89 He said: Your prayer is accepted; so continue in the right way and follow not the path of those who know not.

90 And We brought the Children of Isrâ'îl across the sea. Then Pharaoh and his hosts followed them for oppression and tyranny, till, when drowning overtook him, he said: I believe that there is no deity but He in Whom the Children of Isrâ'îl believe, and I am of those who submit.^a

91 What! Now! And indeed before (this) you did disobey and you were of the mischief-makers!

87a. The *qiblah* is that facing which one prays, and therefore it indicates *a place of worship*. The Isrâ'îlites were obliged to pray in their houses because they did not enjoy full religious liberty in Egypt and had no public places of worship.

88a. The *lâm* here — translated as *that* — is really what is called *lâm ‘aqibat* or the *lam* used to indicate the end. The significance is, not that Allâh had granted them riches to mislead people, but that this was the end for which they used their riches.

88b. Pharaoh and his people did not care for either arguments or signs. Mûsâ therefore now prays for their punishment. *Shadda ‘alai-hi* also means *he assaulted him*, and Allâh’s assaulting their hearts (“harden their hearts”) would mean *depriving them of that which their hearts desired*.

90a. In the agonies of death, pronounced atheists have sometimes recognized the existence of Allâh.

92 But this day We (Allah) shall save you (Pharaoh) in your body that you may be a sign to those after you. And surely most of the people are heedless of Our signs.^a

SECTION 10: Those who heed Warning will benefit

93 And certainly We lodged the Children of Isrâ’îl in a goodly abode and provided them with good things. Then they differed not till the knowledge came to them.^a Surely your *Rabb* will judge between them on the day of Resurrection concerning that in which they differed.

94 But if you are in doubt^a as to that which We have revealed to you, ask those who read the Book^b before you. Certainly the Truth has come to you from your *Rabb*, so be not you of the doubters.

92a. That the body was really cast ashore, though the Bible does not mention it, is clear from the fact that the body of Rameses II, who is regarded as the Pharaoh of Moses, has been discovered as preserved among the mummies in Egypt (*Encyclopaedia Britannica* Art. Mummy). This is another instance of the insufficiency of the Bible narrative and of the truth of the Qur’ânic statement where it supplements the Bible. The discovery now made could not have been known to the Holy Prophet; it was not known to any person in the world till very recently.

93a. The first part of this passage is taken by some to refer to the Isrâ’îlites who were with, and came after, Mûsâ, and by others, among whom is I‘Ab, to the Madînah Jews (*Al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* (Commentary), by Imâm Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî). In the latter case it is

a prophetic announcement as to the Jewish attitude towards the Prophet later on when he fled to Madînah.

94a. It should be noted that the person addressed in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân is not always the Prophet, though the form may be singular, as here. It is very often the reader. Nor do

the words *revealed to thee* show that the Prophet is meant, for the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân is in many places spoken of as being revealed to all the people, as, for instance, "*That which has been revealed to us*" (2:136), and "*We have revealed to you a Book*" (21:10). The opening words of the next section make it clear that the reader is addressed, because there we have: "Say: O people, if you are in doubt as to my religion" (verse 104). Throughout the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân the Holy Prophet appears as having the greatest certainty about the word which was revealed to him, so much so that he never entertained the slightest doubt about the truth of the promises of future success and triumph when, to the material eye, there appeared nothing around but failure and disappointment. In the very next verse the words are, *be not of those who reject the messages of Allâh*, which shows clearly that it is the Prophet's opponents who are addressed here.

94b. That is, ask them whether previous revelation does not contain clear prophecies of the advent of the Prophet.

95 And be not of those who reject the messages of Allâh, (for) then you will be of the losers.

96 Surely those against whom the word of your Rabb has proved true will not believe,

97 Though every sign should come to them, till they see the painful chastisement.

98 And why was there not a town which believed, so that their belief should have profited them, but the people of Yûnus? When they believed, We removed from them the chastisement of disgrace in this world's life, and We gave them provision for a while.^a

99 And if your *Rabb* had pleased, all those who are in the earth would have believed, all of them. Will you then force human beings till they are believers?^a

100 And it is not for any *nafs* to believe except by Allâh's permission. And He casts uncleanness on those who will not understand.^a

98a. Compare Jonah 3:10: “And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them, and He did it not”. References to Yûnus are contained in the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân in 6:86; 10:98; 21:87; 37:139–148; 68:48–50. He bears a resemblance to the Holy Prophet in that his people benefited by the warning, as did the Arabs by the warning of the Prophet, though after much opposition. Yûnus is thus the type of a prophet whose people were dealt with mercifully.

99a. Compare 2:256: “There is no compulsion in *Dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh)”. The reference is to the great zeal of the Holy Prophet and his over-exerting himself in preaching the Truth: “Maybe you will kill yourself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they believe not in this announcement” (18:6).

100a. Those who will not understand the truth will find uncleanness cast on them. That is only natural. The word *rijs* also means *punishment* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane), and the significance, in that case, is that those who care not for the warning must receive the punishment.

101 Say: Behold what is in the *samâwât* and the earth! And signs and warners avail not a people who believe not.^a

102 What do they wait for, then, but the like of the days of those who passed away before them? Say: Wait then; I, too, am with you of those who wait.

103 Then We deliver Our messengers and those who believe — even so (now); it is binding on Us to deliver the believers.

SECTION 11: Divine Judgment

104 Say: O people, if you are in doubt as to my *Dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh), (know that) I serve not those whom you serve besides Allâh, but I serve Allâh, Who causes you to die; and I am commanded to be of the believers,

105 And that you set your purpose towards the *Dîn* (the way of life as prescribed by Allâh) uprightly; and be not of the polytheists.

106 And call not besides Allâh on that which can neither benefit you nor harm you; for if you do, you shall then be of the unjust.

107 And if Allâh afflicts you with harm, there is none to remove it but He; and if He intends good to you, there is none to repel His grace. He brings it to whom He pleases of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

108 Say: O people, the Truth has indeed come to you from your *Rabb*; so whoever goes aright, goes aright only for the good of his or her own *nafs*; and whoever errs, errs only against it. And I am not a custodian over you.

101a. There is an abundance of signs in nature itself but man heeds them not.

109 And follow what is revealed to you and be patient till Allâh give judgment, and He is the Best of the judges.